



LIBRARY OF HEAVEN'S PATH

C502: Celestial Designer



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The lake was frigid and everyone immediately felt a bone-piercing chill as soon as they stepped in.

Following behind Luo Zhu, Zhang Xuan dived down into the lake.

Even the weakest among the crowd was at Zhizun realm. At that level, holding one's breath for twenty to thirty minutes wasn't a problem at all.

Even though Zhao Feiwu's cultivation was slightly lacking, Jin Conghai used his zhenqi to form a protective layer around her and kept transfusing zhenqi to her. As such, she was able to avoid suffocation.

Initially, with the light that shone through the surface of the lake, they could still see the situation before them. However, as they went deeper in, darkness began to envelop them.

Prepared, Luo Zhu took out a few Night Illumination Pearls and passed one to everyone. Under the gentle light, the underwater world appeared clearly before them.

Due to the excessive frigidity of the water, there were no lifeforms in it. Swimming downward, at around a depth of seventy to eighty meters deep, they finally saw the bottom of the lake. Corals of various differing colors filled area.

It was impossible to speak underwater so Luo Zhu communicated via gesturing to the crowd. He adeptly maneuvered around the coral-filled ground and advanced. Before long, a cliff appeared before them.

The surface of the cliff was smooth, and it didn't seem as though there was anything unique about it. If one didn't know that a soul oracle tomb was hidden within it beforehand, it would be impossible to know that there was a hidden mechanism on it.

Flicking his wrist, Luo Zhu took out a stone plate, and after feeling about the wall for a moment, he found a precise aperture and inserted the stone plate into it.

Jiya!

A mechanism was activated. The cliff suddenly came to life and started opening up.

"What exquisite craftsmanship!"

Zhang Xuan's eyes lit up.

Even though it was a mechanism created out of rock, there wasn't even the slightest mark on its surface that betrayed its identity. It might be less intricate than the Celestial Designer Mechanical Container, but its craftsmanship was still far superior compared to the other artifacts he had seen before.

It seemed like the craftsman who built this soul oracle tomb was an expert. Even at worst, he must have at least reached 9-mo.

Legend had it that 9-mo craftsmen were capable of creating machineries and puppets which even Transcendent Mortal experts would be unable to see through. From the looks of it, the legend was indeed true.

It was no wonder why Luo Zhu was so confident that no one other than him would be able to find this location. Given how obscure the location was, it would indeed be very difficult to find it.

The opening of the cliff face revealed an entrance. Luo Zhu took the lead and stepped in.

There were several unique mechanisms to keep out water inside the cavern, blocking the flow of water. As the crowd stepped in, they immediately realized that the area was well-ventilated. There wasn't the slightest feeling that the room was stuffy that came from lack of oxygen.

"This is the passageway to the soul oracle tomb. At the very end is the tomb itself!"

After everyone entered the passageway, the cliff face automatically closed by itself.

"Un!" Zhang Xuan nodded.

The crowd looked at their surroundings in interest.

This was a narrow passageway. Under the illumination from the Night Illumination Pearls, the group saw all kinds of inscriptions on the surface of the wall. Most of them were regarding the various rituals that soul oracles conducted. A sinister air loomed in the area.

"We should proceed slowly. There are a lot of fearsome traps placed along the passageway!"

Familiar with the environment within the ancient tomb, Luo Zhu reached forward and two child-sized puppets appeared before him.

He had probably prepared these puppets specially for this occasion.

Placing two spirit stones into them, the puppets headed straight down the passageway.

Geji! Geji!

Barely after the first puppet took three steps, a strong gust of wind blew, and with a crisp sound, the puppet burst into smithereens.

Everyone narrowed their eyes.

The puppet that Luo Zhu took was crafted using a unique material known for its sturdiness. Even a cultivator of Jin Conghai's caliber would find it hard to smash it in a single blow.

And yet, some unknown mechanism before them had caused it to be reduced to smithereens in a moment. If not for Luo Zhu warning everyone swiftly, that could have been the fate of one of them.

In an instant, cold sweat immediately drenched the back of everyone here.

As expected of one of the most feared occupations in the ancient era, the soul oracle tomb was indeed extraordinary.

If Zhang Shi hadn't seen through Luo Zhu's possession and allowed the soul oracle to guide them through this area, their entire group would have most probably been wiped out before even reaching the soul oracle tomb.

Geji! Geji!

While everyone was still overwhelmed with shock, the second puppet advanced forward. However, barely after it took a few steps, just like the first puppet, it was smashed to smithereens as well.

"Within five steps, there are two death traps. I'll go on first and mark out the spot where you all should step on. Make sure to follow it closely, otherwise... I'll be unable to guarantee your safety!" Luo Zhu instructed gravely.

"Yes!" Knowing the importance of this issue, everyone nodded their heads.

Hu!

Luo Zhu proceeded forward carefully. However, as soon as he stepped forward, the whistling of the wind sounded and it shot past an area not too far away from him. From the looks of it, if one were to be struck by it, one wouldn't be too far from death even if one managed to survive that attack.

However, with a puppet to test out the path, they would be able to avoid the traps in the way.

Looking at the treacherous passageway, Hall Master Sai asked, "Is this... a formation?"

"Given how danger was lying in wait throughout the passageway, could this be a Slaughter Formation?"

If that was the case, given Zhang Shi's understanding of formations, they should've been able to break it and advance safely through.

"It isn't!" Zhang Xuan shook his head.

If it was a formation, he would have surely felt a disturbance in the spiritual energy in the air... But there clearly was none.

"The greatest fear of the soul oracles aren't humans but Soul Devouring Ants, and formations are ineffective on those creatures... Thus, it is unlikely for a soul oracle to incorporate a formation into their defensive mechanisms. If I'm not mistaken, these are mechanical traps!"

After a moment of contemplation, Zhang Xuan had finished his analysis.

The Soul Devouring Ants were the nemeses of soul oracles, so naturally, they had to prepare some traps to protect themselves. Soul Devouring Ants were capable of consuming the spiritual energy contained within a formation and forcefully halt it. Thus, mechanical traps were preferred as to formations.

The crowd nodded in agreement.

"But if those are all mechanical traps, this will prove to be troublesome. None of us here are adept in this field. If only we had a celestial designer here, we'd be really spared a lot of trouble!" Hall Master Sai frowned.

"Celestial designer?" Sun Qiang and the others looked over.

Zhang Xuan had never mentioned such an occupation so they had never heard of it.

"Indeed. Celestial designer, also known as master mechanic, is an occupation of the Lower Nine Paths. They are skilled in designing these mechanical systems. Even though their creation might seem humble on the surface, they usually incorporate sword qi and battle techniques that could overpower even experts when they are activated."

Hall Master Sai explained, "This occupation also has their own organization, the Celestial Designer Institute. They specialize in designing the world's most exquisite weapon and traps. However... I've only read about this occupation in books. There isn't a branch in the Myriad Kingdom Alliance, and it's said that only an empire of Huanyu Empire's tier is qualified to build a branch."

"The artifacts designed by celestial designers are extremely complex and exquisite. It would indeed be difficult to bypass these traps without understanding the logic behind them!"

Zhang Xuan nodded his head as a frown slowly appeared on his forehead.

He had seen the complexity of the Celestial Designer Mechanical Container himself. If not for the Library of Heaven's Path, it would be impossible for him to open it.

Even a single box could be designed so intricately. If a person of that occupation had assisted with the design of the traps in this passageway, the dangers that lurked in this passageway would be unimaginable.

If a celestial designer had assisted with the design of the traps in this passageway, the dangers that lurked in this passageway would be unimaginable.

Puhe!

Just as Zhang Xuan was deep in thought, he heard the sound of a sharp knife tearing through flesh. Lifting his gaze, he saw Luo Zhu hurriedly retreating with a reddened face. His arm seemed to have been sliced by something, and it was bleeding profusely.

"Are you alright?"

Jin Conghai and the others hurried forward to help him stop the bleeding.

"I'm alright!" Luo Zhu shook his head. "The traps in this passageway seem to have become even more complicated than before..."

"Even more complicated? How long is this passageway? How long did you take to reach the end?" Zhang Xuan asked.

"It is around three hundred meters. The previous time I was here, I advanced bit by bit using the puppets and it took me around four days to get to the other end!"

Luo Zhu frowned, "However, it seems like these traps change every single time one enters. My previous experience clearing the traps is completely useless now..."

"Four days?" Zhang Xuan was speechless.

To travel three hundred meters in four days, this passageway was indeed difficult.

"Indeed. But there's no other way around it. The sword qi contained within the traps possess the might of at least a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan pinnacle. If one were to accidentally come into contact with it, one will be torn into half in an instant!"

Luo Zhu shook his head.

"Transcendent Mortal 4-dan pinnacle sword qi?" The crowd was astonished.

When they saw the puppet being reduced to smithereens previously, they already had an idea that the sword qi emanated in the traps were fearsome. Even so, they didn't expect it to be so powerful.

Even a Transcendent Mortal 4-dan pinnacle expert would find it difficult to survive after being struck by such powerful sword qi.

Not to mention, it would be difficult for them to dodge the attacks in such a narrow passageway.

"Do we really have no other choice other than to advance bit by bit?"

Zhao Feiwu frowned.

"That's right! The trap mechanisms left behind by celestial designers are incomparably profound, and they are ever-changing. If one doesn't know the pattern behind the changes, it'll be difficult to clear the traps." Luo Zhu shook his head.

"It won't work even if we were to destroy the mechanical system in this passageway?" Zhang Xuan frowned.

Even formations, an intangible existence, could be stopped with a kick. If they could find the switch to the traps or the center of operation of the system, shouldn't it be possible to shut down the traps?

"Destroy?"

Luo Zhu smiled bitterly, "How could it be that easy? Just like a water wheel, the artifacts left behind by celestial designers are constantly on the move. Even if one had the blueprint on hand, if one doesn't comprehend the logic behind it, it will be futile. If its designs could be overcome so easily, it wouldn't be such a feared occupation!"

Mechanical systems and formations were similar in the sense that even if an amateur were to have the blueprint in hand, if they couldn't understand the workings of the system, they would still be unable to decipher it.

After all, mechanical systems were built to be continuously on the move. If one didn't understand the slightest bit of this occupation, one would be unable to get out of it alive, let alone, destroy it.

"Indeed. This is the reason why celestial designers are feared. They are capable of incorporating mechanical systems into artifacts, thus crafting tools capable of slaughtering experts easily. Furthermore, these artifacts don't need to be powered by spirit stones... If I'm not mistaken, the energy required for powering these traps comes from the waterfall above. As such, unlike formations, compasses won't work. If one

doesn't understand the logic behind the traps, one would never be able to overcome the traps!"

Hall Master Sai nodded in agreement.

Compasses were capable of determining the flow of spiritual energy to detect the weak points of a formation. However... mechanical traps weren't powered by spiritual energy but kinetic energy.

How were they supposed to decipher these traps?

Hearing the analyses of the duo, the complexion of the crowd turned gloomy. The excitement from before had vanished altogether.

Seeing that the morale is down, Zhang Xuan shook his head and said, "Even though compasses won't work, it doesn't mean that there are no other methods of deciphering the traps. Let me give it a try!"

After which, Zhang Xuan smiled faintly and gently touched the floor of the passageway with his palm.

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